



Fourth Aarhus Workshop

24th March 2021, 11.00 till 14.30 (CET), online



UfU Independent Institute
for Environmental Issues



INSTITUTO JURÍDICO
FACULDADE DE DIREITO
UNIVERSIDADE DE COIMBRA

On 1st January 2021, Portugal took over the EU Council Presidency from Germany. Now, there is much to be done to drive forward a green and socially just transformation of Europe! This also means that civil society (organisations) on EU level must be involved in environmental policy processes, i.e. they must be informed, be able to effectively contribute their own ideas and also have the opportunity to take legal action. The Aarhus Convention adopted by the European Union lays the foundations for this. However, citizens or environmental NGOs are still facing **enormous challenges when they want to participate in the European legislative process or want to have environmental decisions by EU institutions reviewed by courts.**

We would like to discuss with you and other representatives of European environmental NGOs as well as legal experts how **effective public participation and access to justice on the European Union** level could look like. First, we will offer an insight into the current law-making process around the new Draft Aarhus Regulation, especially the recommendations by the UN Aarhus Compliance Committee. Second, we will further discuss the challenges citizens and NGOs face when they want to participate in the political and legislative process at EU level. By identifying the shortcomings of past and current public consultations in the environmental field, we want to develop ideas how civil society can effectively participate in the European law-making.

Registration: You can find the registration form [here](#). Participation at the Workshop is free of charge.

Contact: [Kathleen Pauleweit](mailto:kathleen.pauleweit@ufu.de) (kathleen.pauleweit@ufu.de).

More Information on the project: European Implementation of the Aarhus Convention in the Digital Age ([EU-AarKo](#)).

Programme

Event note: The Workshop will be held via Zoom.

Moderation:

Dipl. Geoökol. Larissa Donges, Project manager at the Department of Environmental Law & Participation of the Independent Institute for Environmental Issues, UfU

Kathleen Pauleweit, LLM, Research associate at the Department Environmental Law & Participation of the Independent Institute for Environmental Issues, UfU

13.45 CET	Arrival Time, technical check	Larissa Donges
14.00	Beginning of the Workshop	
14.00 to 14.05	Arrival & Introduction	Larissa Donges
14.05 to 14.10	Welcome Remarks by the UfU Board	Dr Michael Zschiesche , Managing Director & Chairman of the Board, Head of the Department Environmental Law & Participation of the UfU
14.10 to 14.15	Introduction of the Independent Institute for Environmental Issues (UfU) & its current Aarhus project	Larissa Donges Kathleen Pauleweit
14.15 to 14.20	Insights on the Portuguese Presidency of the EU Council by the Associação Natureza Portugal (ANP)	Dr Catarina Grilo , Director of Conservation & Policy at ANP in association with WWF
14.20 to 14.50	Presentation 1 Updates on the Amendment to the Aarhus Regulation with subsequent round of questions	Sebastian Bechtel, LLM , Environmental Democracy Lawyer at ClientEarth Brussels
14.50 to 15.00	Break	

15.00 to 15.30	Presentation 2 How can citizens & NGOs participate in European Environmental Decision-making? with subsequent round of questions	Prof Dr Maria Alexandra de Sousa Aragão , Professor at the University of Coimbra
15.30 to 16.25	Panel Discussion How Can Electronic Public Participation in European Environmental Decision-making Be Strengthened? with subsequent round of discussion	Panelists: Prof Dr Maria Alexandra de Sousa Aragão Rebecca Humphries , Senior Public Affairs Officer at WWF European Policy Office (EPO) Dr Raphael Weyland , Head of Brussels Office at Nature & Biodiversity Conservation Union (NABU) in association with BirdLife Europe Anna Renkamp , Senior Project Manager Bertelsmann Stiftung
	Break	
16.30 to 16.55	Open Discussion Strengthened E-Participation in European Environmental Decision-making – Where & How to Complain?	Moderator: Sebastian Bechtel
16.55 to 17.00	The Way Forward	Kathleen Pauleweit
17.00	End of the Workshop	
17.00 to 17.30	<i>Time for Additional Questions & Answers and Informal Exchange</i>	<i>Workshop Team</i>

This workshop is financially supported by

